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Религиоведение в высшей школе: сравнительный анализ содержания учебных изданий

Проблема содержания учебных изданий для студентов вузов по религиоведению, вышедших в последнее время, является важной и актуальной исследовательской проблемой, так как показывает зависимость их содержания от социокультурных изменений, происходящих в поле отечественного религиоведения: объекте, методологии исследования, научных подходах и принципах.

Методы исследования. Для выявления факторов, влияющих на содержание учебных изданий, проведен их сравнительный анализ (общее количество – 38) по критериям: время выхода учебного издания; ориентация учебного издания (специальность, направление подготовки, уровень образования); структура религиоведения как системы знаний о религии; определение религии как базового понятия; нейтральность позиции авторов учебных изданий по отношению к той или иной религии. Были проанализированы учебники и учебные пособия, подготовленные коллективами авторов и изданные в крупных российских издательствах, либо в вузовских издательствах.

Результаты исследования и их обсуждение. На основе анализа показана эволюция содержания учебных изданий, его корреляция с происходящими социокультурными изменениями и векторами исследования религии в отечественной и зарубежной науке. Выявлены изменения структуры знания и поля религиоведения, различия в способах подачи материала; отмечен прикладной характер некоторых разделов для студентов направлений «Юриспруденция», «Социальная работа» с учетом особенностей будущей профессиональной деятельности. Зафиксированы различия в «нейтральности» авторской позиции по отношению к той или иной религии, равноудаленности от религиозных институтов или конфессий.

Выводы. Отечественные учебные издания по религиоведению претерпели существенные идейные и содержательные изменения с советских времен научного атеизма. В изученных российских учебных изданиях присутствует в систематизированном виде утвердившееся в академическом сообществе исследователей религии знание о религии. Однако доля новых современных тем о религии дискуссионного характера не высока. Выявлено, что авторы учебных изданий, аффилированные с крупными религиоведческими центрами, занимают объективную, нейтральную позицию в описании религий и конфессий. Субъективность, отсутствие нейтральности авторов, а также определенное не следование светскому характеру высшей школы в России обнаружено в учебных изданиях заведений, не имеющих профильных кафедр религиоведения. Организация материала в учебных изданиях затрудняет самостоятельный сравнительный анализ религий учащимися.

Ключевые слова: учебник, учебное пособие, религиоведение, высшее образование, учебная дисциплина, учебное издание, религия

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Studies of religion in high school: comparative analysis of the content of educational publications

The problem of the content of educational publications for university students on religious studies, recently published, is an important and urgent research problem, as it shows the dependence of their content on sociocultural changes taking place in the field of domestic religious studies: object, research methodology, scientific approaches and principles.

Research Methods. To identify factors affecting the content of educational publications, a comparative analysis was carried out (total number – 38) according to the criteria: time of publication of the educational publication; orientation of the educational publication (specialty, field of study, level of education); structure of religious studies as a system of knowledge about religion; the definition of religion as a basic concept; neutrality of the position of the authors of educational publications in relation to a particular religion. Textbooks and teaching aids prepared by teams of authors and published in large Russian publishing houses or in university publishing houses were analyzed.

Research results and discussion. Based on the analysis, the evolution of the content of educational publications, its correlation with the ongoing sociocultural changes and vectors of the study of religion in Russian and foreign science is shown. Changes in the structure of knowledge and the field of religious studies, differences in the ways of presenting material were revealed; the applied character of some sections for students of the areas of "Law", "Social Work" is noted, taking into account the features of future professional activity. There are fixed differences in the "neutrality" of the author's position in relation to a particular religion, and equidistance from religious institutions or faiths.

Conclusions. Russian educational publications on religious studies have undergone significant ideological and substantial changes since the Soviet era of scientific atheism. In the studied Russian educational publications, there is a systematic knowledge of religion that has been established in the academic community of religious scholars. However, the share of new contemporary topics about religion of a debatable nature is not high. It was revealed that the authors of educational publications, affiliated with major religious centers, occupy an objective, neutral position in the description of religions and faiths. The subjectivity, the lack of neutrality of the authors, as well as a certain non-observance of the secular nature of higher education in Russia was found in educational publications of institutions that do not have specialized departments of religious studies. The organization of material in educational publications makes it difficult for students to independently compare religions.

Keywords: textbook, study guide, studies of religion, higher education, academic discipline, religion

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Introduction

Educational literature in a certain field of knowledge reflects the established ideas about the subject of research, the structure of this field of knowledge. Both the subject and the structure are susceptible to change. Thus, according to A. U. Grigorenko, "university textbooks in humanitarian disciplines are an interesting and easily accessible source for describing and studying the dynamics of social and cultural changes taking place in society" [1, p. 126]. Educational literature is influenced by processes and phenomena occurring in higher education in general: globalization, digitalization, humanization, student mobility [2; 3]. However, changes can also occur under the influence of representations' transformation about an object. This assumption is also true for disciplines and fields of knowledge that are just getting their theoretical and methodological formalization in Russia. Domestic religious studies and religious education of the post-Soviet period have undergone serious changes, which are also due to the formation and revision of the science foundations itself, its subject, theoretical premises, models. At the same time, educational publications include the most established part of scientific knowledge, the most conservative, about which there is a certain consensus in the scientific community. However, this knowledge simultaneously serves as the core of science, on the basis of which there is an increment of new theories and models, the expansion of the research field. The core of science is a kind of minimum, knowledge that any professional in the field of humanities and especially in the field of religious studies should have. At the same time, academic religious studies do not stand still, religion is developing, new phenomena appear, which after some time also become part of textbooks and minimal knowledge about religion.

All these changes can be the object of the separate study, showing, first, under the influence of what factors "educational religious studies" is evolving. Secondly, a comparative analysis can show the fundamental differences between educational publications published in large religious centers and publications prepared in universities that do not have specialized departments. On the other hand, it is important to record the content differences of educational publications aimed at students whose field of professional activity includes religion. The novelty of such a research view is due to the lack of such studies with a sufficient abundance of reviews of emerging textbooks or manuals. In the comparative analysis of educational publications on religious studies, we relied not only on the texts of educational publications, but also on articles and reviews of Russian religious researchers. Thus, according to E. V. Vorontsova [4], D. A. Golovushkin [5] the current state of religious studies can be seen through the prism of educational literature. In Vorontsova's article, we find the division of religious studies into 5 directions, traditional for scientific discourse: the history and methodology of religious studies, the philosophy of religion, the sociology of religion, the psychology of religion, and the phenomenology of religion. It will be obvious from our analysis that this position is very often translated into educational publications. The review by A. K. Pogasiy [8, p. 266] presents a position on the youth of domestic religious studies, which is in the process of formation. This inevitably affects the scientific and educational literature, which in turn reflects the changes taking place in the scientific field. A. M. Prilutsky's article justifies the importance of defining the term "religion" in scientific and educational literature, which affects the content and methodology of teaching religious studies in universities [7].

Materials and methods

For comparative analysis of the content of educational publications on religious studies, publications published in recent decades were selected. A total of 38 educational publications were analyzed. The array of selected sources includes both textbooks and manuals, among which there are publications published in major metropolitan publishing houses (Urait, Dashkov and Co., Piter, Gardariki), and in university publishing houses (regional educational publications were mostly published in such publishing houses). For the analysis, textbooks and manuals written by teams of authors with a certain authority, who are representatives of well-known scientific schools, were selected. The title of all educational publications contains the concept of "religious studies", some textbooks are called "Introduction to religious studies". As part of the analysis, we did not distinguish by type of educational publication.

The following criteria were used as comparison criteria:

1. Release time of the educational publication.
2. Orientation of the educational publication (type of educational institution, level of education or direction/specialty to which students are addressed a specific educational publication).
3. Structure of religious studies as a system of knowledge about religion.
4. Defining religion as a basic concept.
5. Neutrality of the author's position.

Research results and discussion

1. Release time of educational publications

Estimating the time of publication of a manual or textbook, we can try to identify the correlation of content depending on historical, socio-cultural conditions. Here we can see a certain evolution of content.

First, we note that a significant part of educational publications were published in the 2000s. In the 90s of the 20th century, not so many textbooks and manuals were published, but these were the first attempts to present the phenomenon of religion in the post-Soviet world with its freedom of conscience and religion.

Secondly, in educational publications of the early 2000s, more attention is paid to topics related to the history of religion and the religiosity forms evolution. This emphasis is due to the interest in presenting the history of religion in a new way, different from the principles of Marxism-Leninism. This principle of historical orientation, dominance of the historical approach is preserved in the most recent educational publications.

Traditional ways of thinking about religion, focused exclusively on the philosophical understanding of religion, are also preserved, but few of them have been recorded. For example, I. N. Yablokov's textbook "Religious Studies: Textbook" (2004) [9]. Based on the choice of topics for coverage in the educational publication, we can conclude that the author focuses on philosophical knowledge of religion. On the one hand, this can be explained by the Soviet tradition of studying religion with its emphasis on theoretical, ideological knowledge of religion, and the location of scientific atheism departments in philosophy departments. During the transition from scientific atheism to religious studies in the 80s of the 20th century, this

tradition continues to be preserved. So D. M. Ugrinovich in the preface to the second edition of his textbook "Introduction to Religious Studies" (1985) writes: "The author considered it appropriate to change the title in the second edition, calling the book "Introduction to Religious Studies". At the same time, the author emphasizes that "the reduction of the title does not mean any change in the author's fundamental positions, who still distinguishes between "theoretical religious studies" (i.e., philosophy, sociology and psychology of religion) and historical religious studies, i.e. the history of various religions" [10, p. 3].

By the end of the tenth years, new subjects appeared in educational publications related to new religious movements and cults, forms of religiosity and modern phenomena: fundamentalism, secularization, post-secularization, tolerance. There are also sections of an applied character: the legal foundations of religion, in connection with changes in federal legislation and judicial practice. In the sections on freedom of conscience and state-confessional relations, topics on the religious security of society and the state began to appear. For example, in the textbook on religious studies, published by the publishing house of the Ural Institute of the Ministry of the Interior of Russia, there is a topic "Religious security" [11]. In the sections about "religious security", the emphasis shifted from issues of implementation of the rights in the sphere of freedom of conscience and religion to the protection of public order and the observance of state interests, the implementation of state policy.

2. Orientation of the educational publication (type of educational institution, level of education or direction/specialty to which students are addressed a specific educational publication)

Educational publications, analyzed by us, are focused, as a rule, on students of higher educational institutions of humanities (philosophy, cultural studies, journalism, psychology, history, sociology, political science, philology, social work, jurisprudence). Religious studies as an educational discipline is included in the structure of higher education programs in accordance with educational standards. The choice of this discipline is carried out by the university independently and in this logic then the discipline is provided by educational publications. Educational publications written by university teachers are usually created according to the courses that are taught in the framework of educational programs. Accordingly, the content of educational publications is built in the logic of the discipline's content or the educational program of bachelor's / master's degree. Thus, according to A. U. Grigorenko, "the textbook on religious studies inevitably reflects at the conceptual level the goal and objectives solved by the corresponding educational course" [1, p. 127]. Educational publications are updated due to changes in educational standards that affect the structure and content of educational programs.

In the 10-s of the 20th century, educational publications appeared en masse, focused on those specialties and directions whose graduates will use religious science in their professional activities. Most published educational publications on religious studies are for lawyers. Such publications include applied aspects of religious knowledge. For example, textbooks for future lawyers or employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. So, in the textbook on religious studies for law universities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, there is a chapter revealing the features of conducting a forensic examination in the investigation of crimes committed for religious reasons, the features of religious expertise, that allows for the prevention of crime on religious grounds.

With the introduction of a cycle of disciplines on the basics of religious culture and secular ethics in Russian schools, there were special textbooks on religious studies for students

of pedagogical specialties. At the same time, we did not find any special differences from educational publications focused on other humanitarian areas.

3. Structure of religious studies as a system of knowledge about religion

The structure of religious studies is debatable within the professional community. This leads to a variety of interpretations of the structure of religious studies in educational publications. However, it should be noted that there is a group of sections that can be called basic and are recognized by the religious studies community of Russia. A similar structure of religious studies is enshrined in the educational standard of the bachelor's degree in the direction 47.04.02 "Religious Studies". Thus, the author of the educational publication I. N. Yablokov notes: "currently, religious studies contains a number of sections, the main of which are: philosophy, sociology, psychology, phenomenology, and the history of religion" [9, p. 11]. This set of branches within religious studies is most often repeated, with the exception of the phenomenology of religion, which is sometimes present separately, then added to the philosophy of religion, then absent.

In Russia, religious studies refer to a philosophical specialty. Hence the domestic disputes about the philosophy and philosophy of religion within religious studies are notable. In a number of textbooks related to major religious research centers, the philosophy of religion is taken beyond the boundaries of religious knowledge, which is clearly reflected in textbooks and manuals on religious studies. For example, this position is found in educational publications on religious studies by M. M. Shakhnovich (Saint Petersburg) [14] and M. G. Pismanik (Perm) [13].

Religious studies have separated itself from philosophy: "it has detached, but until now it has not completely distanced itself from a special branch of this tree – from the philosophy of religion" [13, p. 34]. The author notes that some philosophers continue to consider religious studies a philosophical "province", "however, the presence of an independent theoretical level in it, and then the acquisition and increasing growth of its own empirical level indicate otherwise" [13, p. 34].

The basic section for foreign religious studies – the anthropology of religion in domestic educational publications is rarely singled out as an independent one. Anthropological knowledge of religion is regularly included in sections related either to the history of religion (early forms of religion) or to the history of science itself. The anthropology of religion as a section of religious studies is most clearly presented in the textbook by M. M. Shakhnovich, where it acts as an independent branch within religious knowledge. The author includes five scientific disciplines in modern religious studies: the history of religion, the sociology of religion, the anthropology of religion, the psychology of religion, and the phenomenology of religion; "each is based on its own theoretical and methodological tradition, which often interact and enrich each other" [14, p. 12]. We should note that the philosophy of religion is excluded from this list.

In our opinion, this point of view of the author of textbooks on religious studies is interesting, but unconventional. According to P. S. Gurevich, "religious studies is a complex discipline. It is based on the philosophy of religion, sociology, cultural studies, psychology, and history" [15, p. 18].

Lebedev V. U., Prilutsky A. M., Viktorov V. U. distinguish scientific, confessional, and atheistic directions within religious studies [6, p. 35–36]. They refer to the scientific type of religious studies: anthropological, phenomenological, comparative-historical, sociological, system-structural. Confessional religious studies include studies of religion from a certain confessional position. In such a division, theological and religious scientific attitudes in the

study of religion are mixed. Is it worth talking about confessional religious studies at all, because if we continue the series, then there will also be confessional physics, astronomy, etc.? Also, the authors, in accordance with the specifics of the subject sphere of religious studies within it, discover a number of scientific directions: semiotics of religion, comparative religious studies, hermeneutics of religion, philosophy of religion, phenomenology of religion, sociology of religion, history of religion, linguistics and ethnography, confessional religious studies [6, p. 36].

Thus, the structure of religious studies is constantly expanding and filled with disciplines and sections with specific content (not only empirical, but also theoretical).

4. Defining religion as a basic concept

Despite the characteristic search for a definition of religion in the Russian science of religion, most educational publications do not give it, but rather plan it. The position of many authors of educational publications can be described in the words of A. U. Grigorenko: "taking into consideration that the task of defining the meaning of the term "religion" cannot currently be completed, it is more appropriate to introduce students to various approaches to the interpretation of the meaning of this term" [1, p. 128]. However, we were able to find out that for major religious studies centers (Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Perm), it is characteristic to represent many different definitions of religion, without persuading the reader to some certain point of view. For universities that do not have specialized departments, a different approach is typical. Authors try to solve the problem of defining the term religion and give some one option. The definitions of religion recorded in this part are divided into several groups. Most definitions of religion go back to the definition proposed by I. N. Yablokov. A significant part of the definitions combines religion and culture. But most definitions fix the view of religion as a system of views and belief in the supernatural.

5. Neutrality of the author's position

Most authors of educational publications avoid ideological and confessional positions in the consideration of religion, insisting on considering it as a cultural phenomenon in the history of society. However, manifestations of bias against a number of faiths and religions are found in educational publications published in the 21st century. The assumption about the scientific-atheistic discourse of the possible evaluation position of the authors was not confirmed. Here we can distinguish two reasons for evaluating cases. In the first case, rather, there is an assessment based on the authors' subjective preferences. In O. F. Lobazova's textbook on religious studies (2013) [16] we find the following statements: "religious mutants," to which the author refers everyone associated with new religions and non-confessional religiosity; unfounded fears of new religions and "sects" (note that the author uses this word not in religious studies, but in the mass-media sense); giving "a whole worldview" only to Orthodox and Marxists [16, p. 344]. In the second case, we meet with textbooks written for religious educational institutions. There may be different forms of other religions' estimation, but most often it is expressed in the recognition of either world religions, or monotheistic religions, or widespread in this territory.

In other cases, religious and theological positions of the authors of educational publications are mixed. However, this does not remove the contradictions and differences in the two positions. So, according to A. Grigorenko, "undoubtedly, co-authorship of theologians and religious scholars contributes to the fact that information about the religious traditions of the world is presented more fully, and the combination of different points of view within

a single discourse contributes to a more objective, complete and reliable description of the subject. But this approach inevitably leads to difficulties that cannot be avoided. So, individual chapters and paragraphs of the textbook, written from various conceptual and methodological positions, as a result do not "add up" to a single text, they retain their autonomy and self-sufficiency. This approach does not contribute to the neutrality of the presentation, since from the theological point of view, the mentioned requirement is not considered as mandatory, and it is equally difficult for both the theologian and religious scholar to "remake themselves" [1, p. 127]. We find a similar position in the author of textbooks M. G. Pismanik: "the border between religious studies and theology is not absolute" [13, p. 34]. Religious studies and theology can cooperate, but "in this initial desire for cooperation, it is especially necessary to avoid mutual expansion" [13, p. 34].

Conclusion

A comparative analysis of educational publications made it possible to draw the following conclusions:

1. The educational literature includes knowledge packaged in certain theories that have passed a certain verification in the scientific community and in a systematized form. In other words, theories that introduce new terms to scientific discourse describing new phenomena whose existence is not yet fully recognized by the scientific community do not have the opportunity to become part of a textbook or manual. Accordingly, in educational publications the share of topics, subjects of a discussion nature is quite low.

2. The content of the educational publication is related to belonging to a certain scientific/educational institution/school. For example, it was found that authors of educational publications affiliated with major religious research centers take a more neutral position in relation to attempts to give a single definition of religion. We find less neutrality in educational publications published in universities that do not have a specialized department engaged in the study of religion. Comparative analysis did not reveal any correlation between the author's position and his scientific interests or research experience. At the same time, it is impossible to say whether the "neutrality" of the author's position was affected by his belonging to a religious organization/institution.

3. According to the materials of the comparative analysis, we can talk about a certain ratio of the content of the educational publication with the addressee (field of study, specialty, which the publication is focused on): a large correlation was found in publications for fields whose professional activity is in contact with religious knowledge (for example, law).

4. The structure of knowledge about religion presented in educational publications is variable, but a significant place in the publications is occupied by topics related to the history and evolution of religion. In this perspective, modern forms of religion slip from the reader's field of view, creating a not entirely objective picture of the place of religion in the modern world, its influence on modern processes and phenomena. Different religions exist simultaneously, creating a fabric of multiple modernity. This is especially noticeable in the case of early religions, which are reduced in educational publications to early forms of belief and are completely absent as the religions of peoples that exist here and now.

5. Educational publications do not contain any significant illustrative material or factual details that simplify the perception of knowledge about religion and the formation of a holistic picture of the religious phenomena's diversity in the past and in the modern world.

6. The organization of educational material within publications does not allow for an independent comparative analysis of religions due to the lack of recognized models of religion, so it is often difficult to compare religions among themselves based on the materials of educational publications, even on the subject of clergy, internal organization, and religious rituals.

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